

Article - Public Safety

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§14–1103.

(a) The Council shall:

(1) meet regularly for a period of at least 2 years to address food insecurity in the State; and

(2) work toward the following goals:

(i) to address the food insecurity crisis in the State resulting from the COVID–19 pandemic and resulting economic crisis by:

1. coordinating State and local level food insecurity services to support residents of the State;

2. tracking and analyzing data to create a comprehensive map of food insecurity across the State and identify the gaps in service;

3. leveraging federal and private sector grants and other resources in order to address food insecurity needs;

4. advising the State on how best to allocate resources and increase efficiency; and

5. A. exploring the role of and potential for the federal Community Eligibility Provision to ensure all students in the State are fed; and

B. making recommendations to the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland General Assembly to implement relevant findings under item A. of this item;

(ii) to develop, on or before November 1, 2021, equity and sustainability policy recommendations to increase the long–term resiliency of the food system, including:

1. addressing and eliminating racial inequities in the food system;

2. addressing and eliminating diet-related public health disparities;

3. addressing and eliminating food deserts; and

4. reducing food waste, increasing recycling, and encouraging other relevant environmental impacts;

(iii) to expand the impact of existing food council organizations by:

1. providing coordination and facilitation of knowledge exchange at the State level; and

2. supporting identification and application of grants to operating funds to support existing and new food council organizations as needed; and

(iv) to develop, on or before November 1, 2021, a strategic plan to increase the production and procurement of Maryland certified food, including:

1. increasing the quality and quantity of production, as well as aggregation, marketing, and distribution of local food in urban, suburban, and rural settings;

2. increasing procurement of local food through schools, universities, and other institutions;

3. creating additional market opportunities for Maryland food businesses; and

4. expanding access to small scale manufacturing and food production infrastructure.

(b) To advance the goals of the Council, the Council shall engage and collaborate with interested stakeholders, including:

(1) residents of the State with lived experience of food insecurity; and

(2) food council organizations and similar local level food system convening organizations.

(c) (1) On or before November 1, 2021, the Council shall submit an interim report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, on key findings and activities undertaken by the Council.

(2) On or before November 1, 2022, the Council shall submit a report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, on the Council’s recommendations for a long term structure for a statewide food policy council including providing recommendations on:

- (i) appropriate policy and legislative changes;
- (ii) potential ways to restructure the Council such as:
 - 1. placing the Council within a different agency or organization; and
 - 2. enacting a sunset provision for the Council; and
- (iii) any other recommendations of the Council.

(3) On or before November 1, 2023, and each year thereafter, the Council shall submit a report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, on key findings and activities undertaken by the Council.

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